**WHY DO AN EPQ?**

**NOTES TAKEN FROM THE RUSSELL GROUP ONLINE EVENT – 10TH FEB 2021**

**Presented by Dr Richard Penny (University of Southampton) and Matthew Elliott (University of Leeds)**

**TYPES OF EPQ**

* **Essay based - usually around 5,000 words – primary research will consist of controlled experiments, interview or survey methods or observational slides – essay can be secondary research**

**or**

* **Artefact – shorter, more practical option with written element usually around 1-2,000 words – design/prototype – creative projects via different media**

**No one is better than the other – individual choice**

**BENEFITS**

**SKILLS – PERFORMANCE – ACADEMIC TRANSITION - all interlink with each other.**

**Dr Penny presented bar graphs for the University of Southampton – could see that in the first year, students showed more progress if they had done the EPQ than those who had not – and more likely to pass Year 1. Another graph showed that students were more likely to achieve a 1st class or 2:1 degree if they had taken the EPQ than those who had not.**

**WHY DO RBL? (RESEARCH BASED LEARING)**

* **Very useful for the Personal Statement**
* **Shows motivation/passion/engagement/independence of thought**
* **Useful for interviews/selection days and other written assessments for entry**
* **Helps us to judge your potential which may make a difference at confirmation (of offers)**

**OTHER UNIVERSITIES THOUGHTS ON EPQ**

* **Manchester – “may help boost your UCAS application”**
* **Oxford – “ EPQ not a condition of entry offer but the University recognises the benefits – advise students to draw upon EPQ experience in the Personal Statement”**
* **Cambridge – “welcome EPQ – encourage students to take one”**
* **Durham – similar comments as made from Oxford**

**WHAT DOES AN EPQ LOOK LIKE?**

* **Identify project, produce effective design and thorough plan – should be in a highly organised fashion too**
* **Excellent independent working skills**
* **Wide range of resources used**
* **Critically analyse data effectively**
* **Show links between sources of information and themes of your project**
* **Problems and/or issues are identified and fully explored and addressed**

**“FIRST PLACE TO GO”**

* **Head of EPQ in school**
* **What topic for YOU find particularly interesting? – could check out the degree syllabus and match the topic to an part/element of that syllabus**
* **Need to narrow the title of your EPQ down – do NOT make it broad!**

**ADDITIONAL NOTES**

* **EPQs are “big time commitments” - although started in Year 12, they can be taken into Year 13 - depends on the school/college – it is only available in Year 12 at CGS**
* **EPQs are “new learning” – whatever you topics/theme you chose, it must NOT have been studied previously at A level**
* **You can lose marks for poor recording - clear presentation is very important**
* **Transferable skills from an EPQ are very important and should not be underestimated – can you also link your EPQ to the chosen course you are applying for? This can be an excellent thing to do and will certainly enhance your Personal Statement and application**

**For more help and support concerning the EPQ, you should contact CGS sixth form staff and/or**

**Dr Richard Penny –** **rich.penny@southampton.ac.uk** **and/or**

**Matthew Elliott -** **m.elliott2@leeds.ac.uk**

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